

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY (v.2)

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HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE
May 16, 2001
Richland, WA

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This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of ideas discussed or opinions given, and should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.

Committee Business

Amber Waldref, Committee Chair, opened the meeting and introductions were made. The meeting summary was approved. Gail McClure, U.S. Department of Energy – Richland Office (DOE-RL) announced that Paul Dunigan – on the committee's agenda to discuss National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) notification rules – could not attend the meeting due to sickness.

The committee congratulated committee member Jim Trombold for getting an Op-Ed letter published in the *Seattle Times*. Mr. Trombold reported that the editor had made a typo in his letter; instead of writing, "while we procrastinate, *waste treatment* costs have escalated," they had written, "*water treatment*." Since it was a significant error, the Times agreed to give Mr. Trombold 750-800 words for a clarifying letter to be published in the next one to two weeks.

Letter Regarding EM Secretary's Review

HAB Chair Todd Martin distributed a copy of the letter he had drafted on behalf of the HAB. He explained that during the previous Executive Issues Management Group conference call, participants decided that the HAB should write a letter offering to assist in the Energy Secretary's Top-to-Bottom review. Mr. Martin is asking all committees for

feedback and modifications, so the letter may be adopted at the June HAB meeting; the Secretary's review is quietly happening now, so this is a timely issue.

Committee Mission Statement

Jim Trombold, Issue Manager for the committee's mission statement, had made revisions to the mission statement. After a discussion of some of the word usage, the committee agreed that issue managers would continue to fine-tune both the higher-level concepts and wording over e-mail. Mr. Trombold will continue to lead the effort.

Community Relations Plan

At the committee's previous meeting, DOE-RL had distributed proposed word and grammar changes to its Community Relations Plan (CRP) and asked for feedback from the committee. Amber Waldref suggested committee members look through the document for usage-type changes on their own time and submit suggested changes to Kim Ballinger. The committee then used its agenda time to discuss substantive changes.

"Suggested Changes to the CRP: Evaluation Process"

Doug Huston and Deanna Henry reported on suggestions of the Oregon Office of Energy that were summarized in a handout titled "Evaluating the Tri-Party Agreement Public Participation Process." Copies of this document are also in the gray Public Involvement Policy booklets produced by DOE. Some of their suggestions include that public involvement efforts should be assessed at least annually—realistically after each activity, but at least once a year. There should be a survey or some kind for immediate feedback; the return rate on these is bad, but it is still worth doing. There should be an additional survey beyond comment cards, and agency managers should participate. Evaluations should be expanded to include a variety of criteria, and there should be an evaluation report.

Committee discussion

The committee discussed mail-back survey cards. There was agreement that even if the response is skewed to negative feedback, the cards are still good from a public relations perspective. However, there can be adverse effects if the feedback is not addressed appropriately. The committee wondered if anyone has done an evaluation on the cost-effectiveness of the response card process.

The committee wanted to explore avenues of public involvement other than public meeting events. Gail McClure, DOE-RL, listed some of the public outreach efforts DOE-RL supports, many of which are not public meetings, although she noted that she does not get feedback on non-public meeting activities. Some of those activities include supporting the Hanford Advisory Board; providing funding through grants to Oregon Office of Energy, Department of Health, WSU, and the Oregon Hanford Waste Board; tours; videos, pictures, annual reports, fact sheets, and the HAB Annual Report; responding to information requests from students writing papers; sponsoring a speakers

bureau, civic organizations, forums, NEPA public involvement, town halls, workshops on the DOE budget, etc.

The committee discussed its responsibility to bring those other types of public outreach to the attention of the public. Betty Tabbutt commented on the importance of evaluating tours of the site, since tours are one of the forms of public involvement with the most impact on people. She added that she has heard some alarming stories about tours.

Another committee member suggested defining public communication as two parts: 1) communication providing general information, and 2) feedback and participation in the decision-making process. He suggested providing better visibility in how the feedback and involvement process has influenced decisions.

Regulator Perspectives

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- Dennis Faulk, responded that the document suggested by the Oregon Office of Energy is fine and essentially is what the EPA already does. He would like advice from HAB members about how the agencies can reach new audiences.

Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)

- Joy Turner commented that the mail-back survey evaluations are a necessary evil. They must be done, but it is expensive to put postage on the comment cards and the return rate is dismal.

Further committee discussion

The committee agreed to e-mail further comments to Deanna Henry, who will bring a revised draft to the committee's next meeting. The Tri-Party Agencies hope to release a version of the CRP in early July, which will be followed by a 45-day comment period. The goal is to put out a revised copy in September and a final copy in December.

The committee discussed the intended use of the document in discussion. Many people thought that formal advice was not necessary since all three agencies agreed with the content. One committee member raised the process issue of whether this type of feedback was proper, questioning whether the full HAB should be involved. The committee agreed to attach the draft document to formal advice the committee would be developing later, which would be run through the HAB. The committee flagged the issue of agencies getting feedback at the committee level for follow-up.

Suggested Changes to the CRP: Requirements of NEPA, SEPA and MTCA

Issue Manager Betty Tabbutt drafted a document suggesting changes to the Community Relations Plan to comply with public participation requirements in the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA), and Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). Copies of her suggestions were

distributed to committee members. The underlying concept of her effort was for the CRP to be in accordance with NEPA, SEPA, and MTCA requirements. She would like the CRP to substitute for a public participation plan under MTCA.

Regulator Response

Ecology

- Joy Turner commented that she would want to make sure the CRP is complete enough to meet the regulatory requirements. She hoped combining the documents could eliminate some of the duplicated efforts required for public meeting write-ups on strategies and goals.

EPA

- Dennis Faulk expressed the opinion that EPA could incorporate parts of MTCA into the CRP, but not the entire thing.

Ms. Tabbutt commented that she would like the CRP to not only spell out how the public gets information from agencies, but also how the public provides input TO the agencies.

Due to time constraints, the issue managers agreed to continue to work on this issue after the meeting. Amber Waldref, Doug Huston, Deanna Henry, and Betty Tabbutt agreed to incorporate comments from the committee for further discussion at a future meeting. The committee agreed to work toward preparing advice for the September HAB meeting. Todd Martin cautioned the committee to keep advice at a policy level (that the CRP is a convenient place to meet the environmental laws of MTCA) since there has been disagreement between HAB members in the past about MTCA and what it means.

Evaluation of HAB Public Involvement

Issue Manager Bill Kinsella distributed a handout he prepared for the committee's evaluation of public involvement. He intended to clarify some philosophical questions about communication and involvement and then develop strategies for the committee. He urged people to consider communication as a two way process. While messages are sent with particular intentions, they can be understood in many different ways. In this case, the "senders" are the TPA agencies; their role is to educate and inform the public. The second part of the equation is that channels of feedback are necessary from the public to the agencies.

Questions to consider in an evaluation of public involvement are how to connect the public with the HAB and TPA agencies, the identification and response to constraints on the public involvement process, and changes and improvements the committee can suggest.

The committee discussed how to define the public. Members suggested eliminating the acronym jargon from conversations, and making issues more relevant to people. Different people have different reasons for caring about issues; the challenge is to show

people why they should care, then show them what they can do. Dennis Faulk suggested producing a paper that could succinctly put Hanford into context. Others suggested writing more Op-Ed articles and magazine feature stories to educate people about the extremity of Hanford's waste problems and make the HAB more visible.

The committee responded to a previous comment from Dennis Faulk that the Tri-Party agencies have a difficult time reaching new audiences. The committee discussed acting as a clearinghouse for keeping people updated about public involvement opportunities.

The committee completed this first brainstorming session, which will be continued at the next committee meeting. Mr. Kinsella asked the TPA agencies to provide lists of their existing public activities for the committee to work with.

Update on Burial Grounds Environmental Assessment

Mike Collins, DOE-RL, gave an update on the Low-level Burial Grounds Environmental Assessment (EA). The committee discussed this issue because members had concerns that the NEPA process broke down and people received notice of the EA very late. Mr. Collins reported that DOE-RL thought most of the notification letters got out in timely manner. However, since there was some disagreement about that, DOE-RL extended the public comment period until June 14th and sent notifications by certified mail

The committee decided this was not a time critical issue. There was consensus that the general topic of NEPA public involvement processes should be part of the committee's work plan (with Betty Tabbutt as Issue Manager).

B-Reactor Museum

Madeleine Brown, Issue Manager and liaison to the River and Plateau Committee, updated the committee that she had received feedback on draft advice from the River and Plateau Committee at the previous day's committee meeting. The issue is that cleanup is needed at the B-Reactor, both to comply with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and historic preservation legal requirements. An Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis (EE/CA) was conducted to help the agencies decide what cleanup to perform. The EE/CA will help the agencies make decisions after a period of public comment this summer and identifies cleanup that would make a museum possible. The River and Plateau Committee supported the concept that cleanup should permit long-term preservation. The Public Involvement and Communication Committee will track issues such as public access to the museum and what stories should be told.

Dennis Faulk, EPA, added that the TPA included a milestone to conduct a feasibility study for a museum at the B Reactor. This study did not evaluate the hazards associated with a long-term, full time museum, so the EPA decided to use an EE/CA. Under the

EE/CA, DOE-RL categorized hazards and the cleanup required to make the reactor publicly safe as museum. After receiving public comments, EPA will prepare an action memorandum.

- Is cleanup is being done differently now because it plans to be a museum? What is the expense difference between museum or conventional? Dennis Faulk answered that conventional cleanup entails bulldozing the B-Reactor and putting it in an Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF). Preparing it to be a museum would cost \$3 million. The biggest museum costs comes from annual surveillance and maintenance costs, which are done annually.
- What is the timeline for the public comment period? June 18 through July 17. The document will be sent out a week before the public comment period starts.
- How is the B-Reactor already a de facto museum? Madeleine Brown explained that there is an informal but clearly recognized tour route. All kinds of tours currently go out to the site, there's a tour route, and exhibits have found their way out there.

The committee was concerned that there is no oversight of the activities or stories being told on tours about the B-Reactor. The committee agreed that it should take a tour of the B-Reactor. Bill Kinsella joined Madeleine Brown as issue manager on the B-Reactor.

Dennis Faulk repeated his request for feedback from the committee on the need for additional public meetings about the B-Reactor in places other than the Tri-Cities.

DOE-ORP Openness Plan

Al Hawkins, Department of Energy – Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP), explained ORP's Openness Plan. Mr. Hawkins works in Office of Safety Regulation, which had created its own openness plan so all decisions it makes for regulatory decisions are available to the public. Harry Boston wanted to expand this process, particularly as it related to project management activities. There is not yet a draft of the ORP Openness plan, but Erik Olds, DOE-ORP, will get one to the committee as soon as possible.

- The committee asked if the openness document would be a good vehicle to track ORP progress? Mr. Hawkins answered that the Office of Safety Regulation posts updates on its website, but that it's a lot of information to sort through. It also mails a progress report three times a year.
- Does DOE-RL have an openness plan? Marla Marvin, DOE-RL, responded that it does not, although it has an openness policy that it feels is adequate. She added that DOE-RL and DOE-ORP already both do a lot of the activities listed in the plan.

Work planning

The committee identified issues to report on at the June HAB meeting, and then identified follow-up issues for future meetings. The committee will have to decide

whether it plans to meet quarterly on the Wednesday before full HAB meetings, which has served as the public meeting required for the Tri-Party agencies under the CRP.

The committee discussed its June meeting request. Committee members wanted a June meeting for either a half or full day. Amber Waldref and Bill Kinsella will be the committee's representatives on the Executive Issues Committee conference call. The committee agreed to hold an agenda-setting committee call on Thursday May 24th at 10 am.

Handouts

- Public Involvement and Communication Committee Draft Meeting Agenda, May 16, 2001
- Public Involvement and Communication Committee Work Planning Table, April 11, 2001
- Hanford Advisory Board: Issue Manager Matrix, May 8, 2001
- Oregon Office of Energy's Draft "Evaluating the Tri-Party Agreement Public Participation Process" May 16, 2001
- Madeleine Brown's B-Reactor Issue Background, Status, and Recommendations, May 16, 2001
- Letter from Todd Martin to All HAB Committees regarding EM Top-to-Bottom Review, May 14, 2001
- DOE-RL's grammar and wording changes to the Community Relations Plan
- Edits suggested by Jim Trombold to the Public Involvement and Communication Committee Mission, Process, etc, May 16, 2001
- Betty Tabbutt's Suggested Changes to the Community Relations Plan to Comply with Requirements of NEPA, SEPA, and MTCA, May 16, 2001
- Bill Kinsella's "Evaluating HAB Public Involvement and Communication Activities," PICC, May 16, 2001
- DOE-RL's Public Involvement Policy (booklet), October 1997
- DOE-RL's Public Involvement Desk Reference (booklet), October 1997

Attendees

HAB Members and Alternates

Antone Brooks	Madeleine Brown	Deanna Henry
Doug Huston	George Jansen, Jr.	Bill Kinsella
Paige Knight	Todd Martin	Leon Swenson
Betty Tabbutt (phone)	Jim Trombold (phone)	Amber Waldref

Others

Dee Lloyd, DOE-RL	Tim Hill, Ecology	Nancy Myers, BHI
Marla Marvin, DOE-RL	Fred Jamison, Ecology	Kim Ballinger, Critique
Gail McClure, DOE-RL	Joy Turner, Ecology	Christina Richmond,

		EnviroIssues
Andrea Powell, DOE-RL	Dennis Faulk, EPA	Susan Wright, EnviroIssues
		Skip Heinemeyer, FH
		Sharon Braswell, Nuvotec
		Peter Bengston, PNNL